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The Sufficiency of the Christian Ministry.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. JAMES,

TORONTO.

ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30th, 1856.

AT THE VISITATION

OF

THE RIGHT REV. JOHN, FIRST LORD BISHOP

OF THE

DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS BROCK FULLER, A.M.

Rector of Thorold, and Rural Dean of Niagara.

TORONTO:

HENRY ROWSELL, KING STREET, EAST.

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Extract from the Minutes of the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto, May 2nd, 1856.

"Moved by Archdeacon Bethune, and seconded by Rev. Dr. O'Meara,
Resolved---

"That the thanks of the Clergy be offered to the Rev. Rural Dean Fuller, for the excellent sermon delivered by him at the Visitation of the Lord Bishop, on the 30th ult. ; and that he be requested to allow the same to be published."

As, in preparing the following Sermon, the author aimed not at producing either an original or learned discourse: but simply one, that might be of benefit to his brethren of the ministry; he freely availed himself of such writings on the subject as were in his possession: and takes this opportunity of expressing his obligations to many able authors, for both ideas and expressions.

THOROLD, May 17th, 1856.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY:

A VISITATION SERMON.

"Our sufficiency is of God." II. Cor. iii. 5.

In occupying a pulpit in this great city for the first time since my ordination, more than one and twenty years ago; and in attempting to discharge the important duty of a preacher to a company of preachers (at the feet of many of whom, and especially of our venerable and revered Diocesan, I ought rather to sit as an humble learner); I desire, brethren, to speak in entire *reliance* on HIM, who has graciously promised that "His strength shall be made perfect in our weakness." And in making such remarks as naturally suggest themselves to me, in connexion with the words of the text, I trust that I may be considered merely as desiring, in all faithfulness and Christian love, to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," and to recall to your recollection important truths, with which you have been all thoroughly conversant.

The words of the text plainly point out to us the only source, whence we can hope for success in discharging the momentous duties of the Christian ministry.

It has been well remarked, that the office of a *lawyer* is important, because it watches over our *property*; and the office of a physician *much more* so, because it guards our health; for "the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment." But the care of the never-dying soul is infinitely *more important* than either our life or our property. For our life, at the best, is but a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. And of earthly possessions, when put in competition with the never-dying soul, our blessed

Lord leads us to make a right estimate, in those striking questions: "What shall it profit," &c. &c.

Our work, brethren, is *chiefly* with the never-dying soul. We are sent to testify to men "the Gospel of the grace of God:" to rescue guilty and depraved beings from the depths of perdition, and to conduct them to the throne of God, and the society of the blessed in heaven. Our mission is to transform them (God being our almighty helper) from the slaves of Satan, (led captive by him at his will) to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. This, brethren, is a most difficult and important work; and its importance is bounded by no space and no time. One immortal being, snatched from endless misery and made an heir of glory, will, in God's hands, be made an instrument of calling others to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; and of building up many saints in His most holy faith. These, in their turn, will be made instrumental in blessing those with whom they are associated: and those, again, will prove blessings to others, until the circle of their influence widening into distant countries, and extending into future ages, the day of judgment will show thousands, if not millions, of the human race rising up and calling some faithful ambassador for God blessed—seeing they can all trace back to him the inestimable blessing they enjoy, of standing on the right hand of the Great Judge of all.

Thus, my brethren, may you confidently hope that the effects of your humble labours will be felt and acknowledged before on assembled universe, when all earthly greatness shall be past and forgotten!

We are shepherds of God's flock committed to our care. "The good Shepherd" was so common a figure that the prophet Jeremiah expresses God's care for his people by it. He speaks of him as "feeding them, as a shepherd"; as "carrying the lambs in his bosom, and gently leading the ewes that were with young." Our blessed Lord also styles himself "the

good Shepherd, who knew his sheep, and would lay down his life for them." The title of *pastor* or shepherd, therefore, conveys an expression of the great *trust* committed to the ministers of Christ, and supposes a constant and a tender care in *looking after*, in *instructing*, in *watching over*, and in *guarding* the flocks intrusted to their care, against *errors* and *sins*.

The title of *ambassador* is also given to the ministers of Christ. And the embassy on which they are sent is the noblest and most important on which the sons of man can be employed. Their special business is to treat of peace between God and man. To them is committed the word of reconciliation. They are commissioned by Christ, and do speak in God's name, as if God did beseech men by them: so do they in Christ's stead press men to be reconciled to God."

Another, and a more glorious title belonging to the ministers of God is that of *angels*, who, as they are of a purer and sublimer nature, and are called "a flaming fire;" so do they *always* behold the face of our heavenly Father, and *ever* do his will; and they are also *ministering* spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are appointed to be heirs of salvation; they are called "the angels of the churches, and also the glory of Christ."

We, brethren of the ministry, are but men—men of like passions and infirmities with others; but the sublime and momentous end of our ministry reflects great honor and attaches immense importance to it. Things common or mean in themselves, acquire unspeakable excellence and importance by association and destiny. And thus God puts great honor on his ministering servants, by intrusting to them the care of the never-dying soul, and by allowing them to be "fellow-workers with Christ," in the great scheme of salvation. And when all the works of every other workman shall be forgotten; when the noblest paintings that the world ever saw shall

have faded away; when the sublimest monuments that genius ever conceived and skill ever executed shall have mouldered into dust; when the pyramids of Egypt shall be levelled with the plains around them; when the immortal works (so called) of philosophers, legislators, historians and poets shall be lost; and when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all earthly things shall be as if they never had been—then, brethren, the effects of your studies, your visiting the sick and the dying; your catechising the young, and instructing the more advanced; your preaching the gospel; your performance of the offices of the church, and your administration of the blessed Sacraments, shall still *continue* and be seen of the assembled universe!!!

But, brethren, whilst we thus *magnify* the office, we feel that we are *humbling* the *instrument*. The high elevation to which we have been called—so far from begetting in us a *vain-glorious* spirit, calls us to *deep* self-abasement and reverence. “Woe is me,” was the language of the evangelical prophet, when contrasting the high honor conferred upon him with his personal meanness: “Woe is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips.” How *humble*, and yet how appropriate the language of St. Paul; “unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” And again: “I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.” And *who* amongst us, brethren, can *help feeling* our utter *unworthiness*, when contemplating the duties of our high and holy calling, or using the unfeigned language of this great apostle of the Gentiles: “Who is sufficient for these things?”

But, though humbled under a sense of our utter unworthiness, we should also ever bear in mind the *heavy responsibility* resting upon us—a responsibility voluntarily incurred by us.

As "shepherds," we are intrusted with the care of God's sheep. As watchmen, we are placed in charge of the city. As sent out into a benighted world, we have continually to "hold forth the lamp of light" in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. As ambassadors of God, we are ever to uphold the honour and dignity of our Master: ever to consult His wishes, and as far as in us lies to promote His interests.

And our responsibilities are immeasurably heightened by the momentous fact, that our office chiefly regards *eternity*. This is an awful peculiarity of the christian ministry. The merchant, if he fails in his enterprise, loses only his property: the statesman, if unsuccessful in his measures, injures the kingdom, with which he has been intrusted: the minister of God, if he fails in his duty, ruins the soul intrusted to his care. In the two first cases instanced here, the consequences of their failure are bounded by the present brief space of existence; and on the great day of judgment it will matter little what estates or kingdoms have been won or lost; but in the case of the minister of God, the effect will be extreme—everlasting, infinite. The lost soul must live for ever, and will be the wretched monument of his negligence and guilt! Oh! that each of us, my brethren, may ever bear in mind the fearful responsibility which belongs to our office—that our ministry hardens and kills, as well as softens and quickens—that we are set, like our Divine Master, for the full rising again of many in Israel,—“to the one, we are the Saviour of death unto death, and to the other, the Saviour of life unto life.”

As the work with which we are intrusted is important, the dignity of our office great, and the responsibility attached to it almost overwhelming; so are the difficulties and trials connected with it of no ordinary character. It is part of our duty to turn men's attention away from the things

which are seen and are present; and to call them to those things which are not seen and eternal. We call upon them to withdraw their affections from a world, which is incessantly appealing to their senses and soliciting their hearts; and we ask them to bestow them upon one, whose very existence depends upon testimony. We call upon them to keep their bodies under—to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts—to renounce those things which they have tasted, and which are pleasant to the taste, for the sake of things for which they have no relish. We call upon them as they value their salvation, to turn aside from the well-beaten path in which they have long walked, and where they have been accustomed to seek and find enjoyments; and we beg them to pass through the straight gate, and to work their way along the narrow path, from which they have years before turned away in disgust, and which they have ever been led to view as one of constraint and hardship. In short, brethren, we ask them to deny themselves, to take up their cross daily and follow Christ.

We, indeed, set before them rewards of no common magnitude. We invite them to take possession of “such things as eye,” &c.; but, alas! too often we speak to hearts which have no regard for these kind of rewards. We address our invitations to minds fatally indisposed for the felicities of heaven, and which prefer the grovelling things of earth to those treasures which are at God’s right hand for evermore; even as the Gergesenes preferred their service to the blessings bestowed upon them by the presence of the Divine Redeemer, when they besought Him to depart out of their coasts.

We address our message to those, who, though originally created in the image of God, and possessed of souls which can never be happy except in the enjoyment of those blessings which we offer to them in the gospel of His dear Son, have nevertheless lost all relish for these blessings; there-

fore, like Ezekiel, we prophecy to dry bones in the valley of vision, which will never live but under the reviving influences of the spirit of God.

This natural indisposition to the things and service of God has, in every age of the Christian Church, been a daily cause of discouragement to the faithful ministers of Christ.

Here, brethren, is where the christian minister especially feels how little he can do of himself, and how entirely he has to rely on God's grace for a blessing on his labours. Like St. Paul, he may plant, or at least try to plant: like Apollos, he may water according to the best of his ability, but after all, it is God that alone can give the increase.

The work in which we are engaged is a spiritual work; and unless God vouchsafes to those on whose behalf we labour the graces of His Holy Spirit, we must labour in vain. In the language of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, "Who is Paul, and who is Apollos; but ministers, by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man: I have planted; Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. It would be to no purpose for the farmer to sow his seed, unless God should bless it, and make it to spring up and grow. There is no vitality in the seed; nor does the earth, into which it is sown, possess any power of itself to impart life to it. God—the Great Author of life—alone imparts that life to the seed, which it neither has in itself, nor can get from the ground in which it is placed. In like manner, it would be in vain for the farmer to water his seed sown, unless God should bless it. There is no *living* principle in the water; no power in the rains of heaven to make the seed germinate and grow. It is true, that this is the ordinary course of nature. The seed is to be planted in the earth, the water to descend upon it; but still the life comes from God alone. These means

are His own appointment. And He, in mercy to the wants of man and the lesser animals, makes the seed sown to germinate; and nourishes the tender plant with rain from heaven, and strengthens it with the genial warmth of the sun. And so, brethren, it is with the Word of life. Thousands possess that precious Word without being blessed thereby. To thousands the Gospel is faithfully preached,—and yet it proves to them only a savour of death unto death; for the Word of life has no vitality in itself; the preaching of the Gospel has no power in itself; but, when God blesses that Word sown by His ministers in the hearts of His people, *then*, and not *till then*, does it bring forth the fruits of a holy and religious life.

The seed of Divine life must be sown in the heart, and the heart must be prepared for it; even as the earth is prepared for the seed sown in it: and *afterwards* it must be *cultivated* and *refreshed* with the *dews of Divine grace*; or the plant of godliness, that springs up in it, will make no shoots upward, nor bear fruit to God's glory, and the good of men. But still it is all of God; just as much as the rich and yellow harvest is all from God. The souls of men flourish and are fruitful, as they are privileged to feel the beams of the Sun of righteousness, and to partake of the refreshing dews of Divine grace.

The ministers of God, however able, or however devoted, cannot, of themselves, bless the souls of their people. The state of mankind by nature, as described in the Bible, is such that nothing *but the Almighty power of God* is sufficient for this great and most difficult work in which we are engaged. Men are said to be "*dead*" in trespasses and sins. What power has mortal man to raise the dead? Men are described as in themselves "*blind*." Who but God can open the eyes of those born blind?

Their hearts are said to be "*hard and stony*." Now what

power of man can touch such hearts, and render them soft and tender? It is therefore *evident*, from the whole tenor of the Bible, that the hearts of men are in God's hands, not in ours; that in the great work intrusted to our care, "our sufficiency is of God."

How often have we felt this truth, when standing in our pulpits, and, casting our eyes over the scores or hundreds before us; we have seen many, perhaps, who, we have every reason to believe, are living far from God, and unmindful of eternity.

They have been dedicated to God's holy service in the Sacrament of Baptism, whilst tender infants in their mothers' arms; but they have not been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; they have not been fed with that spiritual food which was *necessary* for them: and therefore they are not growing, like our blessed Saviour, "not only in stature, but in favor with God" and their fellow creatures too. Some of them have refused to ratify, in their own persons, their baptismal vows and obligations. Every argument that their anxious parents, their kind sponsors, and you, their faithful ministers, could urge upon them, has proved of no avail! Neither the earnest entreaties, nor the most forcible appeals to their conscience, their duty and their eternal interests, could move them to take upon themselves the promises and vows made for them by their sponsors in their baptism. They have resolved to bind themselves by *no* such obligations; they have kept their resolutions, and are now living to the world, and not to God. Others, again, have ratified their baptismal vows and obligations in the holy ordinance of Confirmation. The prayers of their parents, their friends, of you their ministers, of the officiating Bishop, and of themselves, appeared to have been heard, and a blessing seemed to have rested upon them. But "the temptations of

the world, the flesh, and the devil" have prevailed over them; they have fallen from their steadfastness, and are now walking the broad, frequented road that leads to everlasting misery.

Others have even partaken at your hands of the blessed "Sacrament of Christ's body broken, and his blood shed for them;" but, instead of "letting their light shine before men, and glorifying their Father which is in heaven," they are "crucifying afresh the Son of God, and putting Him to an open shame." Others, of whom you have had the strongest hopes, have become so immersed in the world, that though "diligent in business," correct in their deportment, and honourable in their dealings, they have none of that fervency of spirit which becomes the children of God; and you are led to fear, that "sowing to the flesh, they shall of the flesh reap corruption" only. To these, and to many others, who are habitually doing "those things which they ought *not* to do, and leaving undone those things which they ought to do," you have, year after year, spoken the words of eternal life; you have set before them the emptiness of the world, and the folly of trusting to its delusive promises: you have shown them that "the way of transgressors is hard," and that the portion of those who refuse, or neglect to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, is, and must be everlasting misery with Satan and his fallen angels in the depths of perdition: you have sounded in their ears all the terrors of the Lord; you have besought them, as reasonable men, as responsible creatures, and as heirs of immortality, to flee from the wrath to come, and to secure, ere it be too late, a portion at God's right hand for evermore.

Not content (as none of us *should* be) with doing this, you have set before them in the clearest manner the pleasures and the blessings of God's service; the happiness enjoyed by the children of God; the peace of mind, which is *their* portion: but, above all, brethren, you have endeavoured to win

them to God's service by pointing out to them the unparralleled love of God, who, in mercy to a sinful and rebellious world, spared not His *own* Son, but *gave* Him up to become "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" to suffer, and bleed, and die upon the accursed cross, a ransom for their sins. You have thus endeavoured to *win* them for heaven, by displaying the wonders of the cross, and the unspeakable love of Him who hung there.

You, perhaps, have visited them in their seasons of affliction, and stood by them when their nearest and dearest friends bade them adieu for ever. You have endeavoured to improve those solemn seasons for their soul's everlasting good. You have called their attention to the concerns of their own souls; you have pressed upon them the uncertainty of life, the certainty of death, and the absolute necessity of living *ever* with their loins girt, and their lamps burning, ready, even at a moment's *warning*, for their summons hence.

You have visited them, when laid on the beds of sickness. You have, in all faithfulness and truth, discharged the duties of your holy office towards them. You have spoken honestly, yet kindly, to them of their past lives. You have compared those lives with the requirements of God's Word. You have told them that no sinful action,—no idle, or foolish or wicked word,—no lustful, or malicious or evil thought, which they have allowed to dwell in their minds, and thus to be made their own, is hid from the eyes of Him, who marketh all these things down in the book of His remembrance, and will produce the account of them before men and angels on the great day of judgment, *unless blotted out by the blood of Christ*. You have faithfully pointed out to them that blood; and you have earnestly and affectionately besought them to go and wash out their sins therein: and still you have deeply felt that you have spoken to them to little purpose.

You have *convinced* their *minds*; but you have not

changed their hearts. Like Felix, they trembled, when you spoke to them of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;" and if, unlike him, they have not said unto you, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will send for thee"—still they have *profited as little* by your arguments and entreaties as Felix did by those of St. Paul.

But, brethren, I doubt not, your labours have been greatly blessed to others; and you have amongst those committed to your care *many* who will, on the great day of account, be found *seals of your ministry*!!! Still I feel *confident*, that in regard to *these*, too, you are most ready to acknowledge that *your sufficiency has been of God*, and that though you endeavoured to discharge your duties towards them, yet the *blessing on your labours was from God alone*.

This was the view taken of his ministry by the great apostle of the gentiles. He declared to the Corinthians that he had not the slightest idea of commending himself or of taking any credit to himself for anything that he had been enabled to do. He maintained that such a course would be quite unnecessary at Corinth, where they themselves were the most satisfactory proof that could be possibly adduced on his behalf. "Ye are our epistle" (said he), "written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in *tables of stone*, but in *fleshly tables of the heart*. And such trust have we, through Christ to God ward; not that we are *sufficient of ourselves* to think anything, as of ourselves; but our *sufficiency is of God*." And *this* was the *uniform tenor* of his language.

When speaking to the same Corinthians of the *abundance* of his labours, he is still very careful to add, "yet, not I, but the grace of God which was in me." When he assured the Phillippians—"I know how to be abased, and I know how

to abound; everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need," he humbly adds, "*I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me.*" When exhorting the same Christians "to work out their salvation with fear and trembling," he adds, by way of encouragement, the gracious assurance—"for it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." St. Paul was a man of like passions with ourselves, brethren, and we know that he had "*a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him;*" yet he found that God's grace was amply "*sufficient for him.*" From the hour of his conversion to the day of his martyrdom, he was set for the defence of the gospel.

It was the *same grace* which is offered to each one of us, that supported him in all dangers and carried him safely through all his trials. It was *this*, which enabled him to speak of himself as "*in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.*" It was this, and this *alone*, which enabled him to "*take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake.*" It was this, which enabled him to spend and be spent, to fight a good fight, to keep the faith; yea, and at last to seal his testimony with his blood."

Nor does the church, to which we have the privilege of belonging, fail to teach us the same important lesson. For we read in the 10th Art. that, "*we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God, by preventing us; that we may have a good will and working with us, when we have that good will.*" In the Collect for the 2nd Sunday in Lent,—that "*we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves.*" In that for the 1st Sunday after Trinity,—that "*through the weakness of our nature, we can do no good thing without God's help.*" In that for the 19th Sunday after Trinity, we are taught to address our Lord in

these terms: "O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please thee;" and in the 2nd Collect for daily evening prayer we are taught that, "from God all holy desires, all good counsels, and all good works do proceed." But whilst our Church thus teaches us *these* scriptural truths, she also leads us, in all her services, to pray for God's *grace*; that, "being strengthened by his holy spirit in the inner man, we may be enabled to do those things which of ourselves we never could accomplish."

Thus, brethren, should we all learn from the dignity, the importance, the responsibility and the difficulty of the work in which we are engaged, from the unvarying teachings of God's word; from the practice of the great apostle of the Gentiles; and from the instructions of our Prayer books, to attempt no discharge of the duties of our sacred ministry in our own strength; but continually to seek in the diligent use of the means of grace strength from God for this special purpose; and continually to labour, trusting in his Almighty aid.

And it strikes me that another most important lesson is to be learned from the practice of St. Paul. We find him frequently asking for the prayers of those to whom he addressed his epistles. In concluding his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, he says: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of God may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you." In that to the Ephesians, he exhorts them to "pray always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication, for all saints; and for *me*, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." To the Thessalonians and Hebrews, he says, "pray for us." And in this respect, as in all others, we find our holy Church walking in the footsteps of this great apostle of the Gentiles.

At the Ordering of Deacons we find them commended to "the prayers of the congregation:" we find the same goodly practice observed at the ordering of priests; and further, after their public examination, the congregation are desired secretly in their prayers to make their humble supplications to God for his blessing on those to be ordained to the priesthood—"for which prayers, silence is kept for a space;" and in the order for daily morning and evening prayer, we are taught thus to pray: "Almighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels: send down upon our bishops and curates and all congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of thy grace: and that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing;" and in that sublime portion of our service, the Litany, we are taught to say—"That it may please thee to illuminate all bishops, priests and deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of thy word: and that both by their preaching and living they may set it forth and shew it accordingly; we beseech thee to hear us, good Lord:" whilst days are set apart by the church to be observed by her devout members as special seasons of prayers for God's blessing on those about to be admitted to this sacred service.

Brethren! we *need* the prayers of our people, not only as men, but as those to whom the care of their souls has been committed by Almighty God. Did our people earnestly and faithfully bear us on their arms in prayer from day to day, we might expect a greater blessing in our own souls, and the power to become greater blessings to them!!!

We live in troublous times, my brethren! For fifteen centuries it has been deemed the duty and the privilege of Kings to be nursing fathers: of Queens, to be nursing mothers to the church!! But it has been reserved for these latter days, and for this distant colony of the British empire, to witness a *sad change* in this respect. We have lived to see this duty

repudiated by those, who speak and act in the name of our gracious sovereign lady the Queen. They have solemnly declared that they owe us no greater protection, no greater favor, than they owe Jew, Turk, or Infidel.

Theirs, not ours, will be the *loss*? We have sought no severance of the connection that has so long and so happily subsisted between the Crown and the Church. We seek none now. We still owe cordial and entire allegiance to the British Sovereign; we still acknowledge the supremacy of the British Crown; but we are led, more than ever before, to feel that *our sufficiency is in God*. We are led to take such steps, (and happily with the concurrence of our most gracious Majesty the Queen) as our altered position so imperatively demands. We are about to meet in Diocesan Synod—bishop, clergy and laity together—to consult and devise measures for the best interests of our beloved Zion. Bear with me then, brethren, while I beseech you, in this most important step, in this meeting, on which the best interests of thousands and thousands as yet unborn, deeply depends; let me earnestly *beseech you*, to come to the discharge of your momentous duties, relying *not* on any superior abilities you possess, or on your greater learning, or more *extensive experience*; but on HIM, who alone is sufficient for you. If we all come to our solemn deliberations, seeking His guidance, and leaning on his *Almighty* arm, we may expect His abundant blessing on our labours. Such plans will happily be adopted as will bind us together as members of one great family: clergy and laity cordially working together, with our venerable and revered Diocesan [in great mercy spared to us beyond the ordinary age of man] presiding over and directing all. A new life will be infused into our branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. We, her ministers, will feel more fully than we have ever yet done our duties and privileges; and we will return to our parishes resolving in God's strength to devote ourselves more earnestly than we have yet done to

the care of the flocks intrusted to us; and to the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom by every means in our power.

Our people will be led to feel that they have a deep and lively interest in the welfare of the Church; that they are bound, not only to contribute of their worldly means for her support, but also to bring down God's blessing upon their clergy, by prayers to Him in their behalf, to aid them by their counsel and assistance, in all their plans for good; and to let their light so shine before men, &c.

Bear with me still, brethren, whilst, in conclusion, I advert very briefly to one matter of the utmost importance, that we will be called to provide for in our approaching meetings. I allude to the division of this immense diocese, and the regulations to be adopted in regard to the choice of bishops by our Synod. Here, brethren, we stand on *peculiar ground*. For the first time in the British Church, has this privilege been accorded to the Bishop, Clergy and Laity, in Synod assembled! May we so exercise this privilege that the whole Church shall have reason to feel that this privilege has been well accorded to us. Let us lay aside all worldly considerations; all private feelings, and act with a deep sense of the immense responsibility resting upon us. Let us remember that our action will, in all probability, mould and shape the action of future Synods; not only here, but in every portion of the British Empire; that the eternal well-being of thousands and thousands will be influenced by what we do during this week!!!

Let us, then, enter upon our work with a single eye to God's glory and the good of men; with deep distrust of ourselves; with fervent prayer to Almighty God for His guidance; His aid, His spirit, His abundant blessing.

Then shall we find that, feeling ourselves to be weak, we have been strong in Him; and that though we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, our *sufficiency* has been of God.